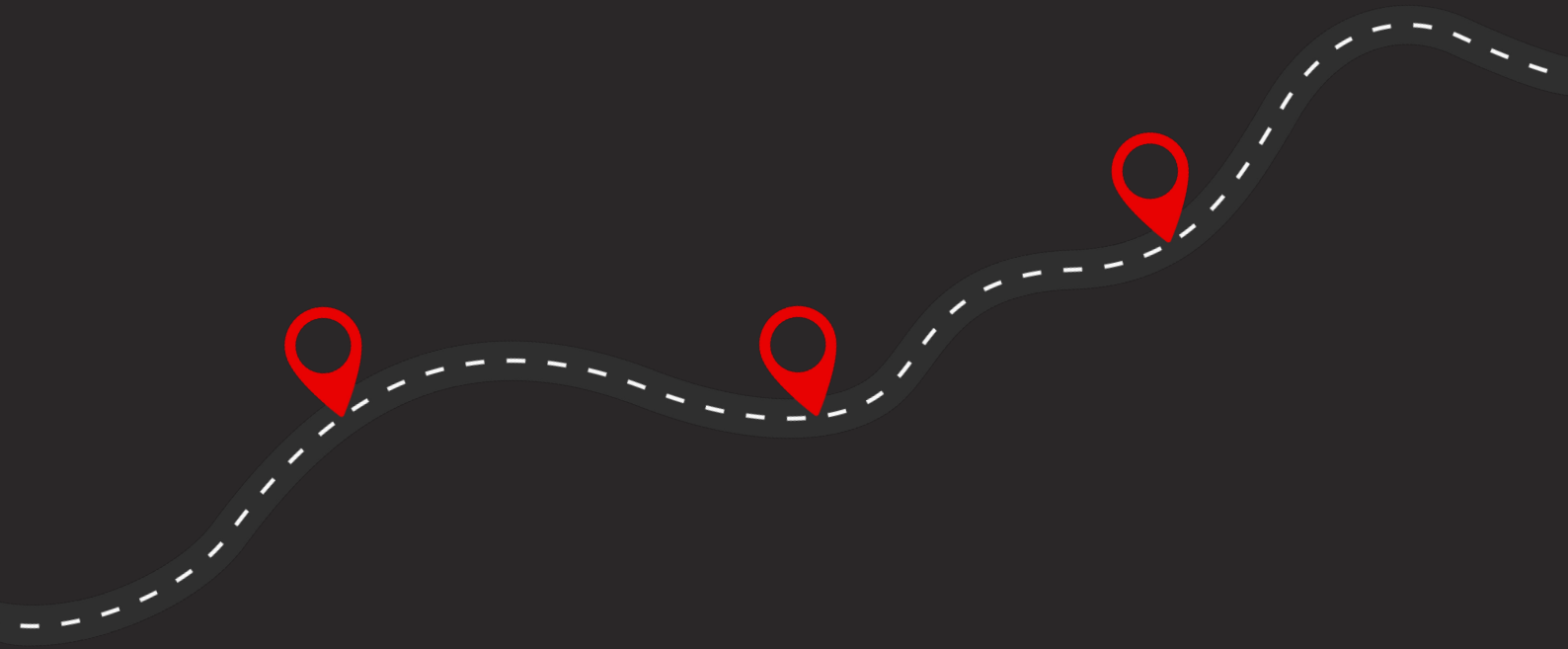


FULLY

2026

7 days of prayer and fasting



FOLLOWING JESUS



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CHURCH

"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."
Galatians 2:20 (NKJV)

INTRODUCTION

I use the GPS on my phone a lot, and one of the features I find most helpful is the re-centring button. After a while, the signal can drop, or your phone may not be locating correctly; re-centering quickly gets you right back on track.

In biblical days, the Jewish people were required to go to Jerusalem three times a year: first in spring, second in early summer, and third in early autumn, which is where we are now. It was a re-centring of sorts. So, this September, we will also be re-centring our lives and ourselves on the cross.

Fully Following Jesus

To fully follow Jesus is to do more than admire His sacrifice from a distance. It is to allow the cross to shape our lives, our decisions, our relationships, and our devotion to God. During these seven days of prayer and fasting, we will focus on the seven sayings of Jesus from the cross, taking time each day to reflect on His words and respond as His disciples.

The cross is not only the centre of Scripture and history, but it is also the defining call to Christian discipleship.

The cross is at the centre of Scripture and of history.

A Bible without a cross is a Bible without a climax, a Bible without an answer. The spiral of sin that began in Genesis 3 must be stopped; the death of Jesus terminates the downward spiral. In Jesus' body, He took on the sin of the world and paid the price for all humanity. That is why Paul said:

"For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified."

1 Corinthians 2:2 (NASB)

God's wisdom is found not beyond the cross, but in the cross and through the cross.

"but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block, and to Gentiles foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."

1 Corinthians 1:23-24 (NASB)

WHAT IS FASTING?

Fasting is a spiritual discipline that believers have practiced all around the world for thousands of years. Traditionally, fasting means abstaining from food for a set period of time. It is a discipline of denying our natural desire for food, humbling ourselves, and taking more time to focus on God.

Whilst some will fast all food, others may choose to fast certain types of food or fast certain meals during the day.

Sometimes you may want to include additional forms of abstaining alongside your fast. Whilst fasting is always about food, we can also choose to abstain from things such as television, social media, or YouTube. Anything that tends to take our time or preoccupy us.

As you fast, turn your hunger for food into hunger for God, focusing on prayer and the study of God's Word. By doing this, we align ourselves with God's will for our lives.

Fasting is not a means of twisting God's arm to fulfil our desires or to gain His approval, but it can often precede a move of God. The Bible describes several examples of this:

- Moses spent forty days alone with God and fasted until he received the Ten Commandments (Exodus 24:18).
- David sought a personal breakthrough as he humbled himself through fasting (Psalm 35:13).
- Daniel fasted and prayed as he sought a breakthrough for the exiled people who had lived in rebellion against their God (Daniel 9:3-4).
- Jesus Himself entered a forty-day fast before launching His public ministry (Matthew 4:1-2).

PREPARE

The more prepared you are as you enter these seven days, the better. Before starting this period of prayer and fasting, take some time to prepare yourself and decide what and how you will fast, and what you are believing God for. Be expectant for God to move.

If you are going to enter a full fast, there is wisdom in thinking about how you will transition from your ordinary diet into the fast, and how you will transition back to your ordinary diet afterwards.

You might find it useful to eat lighter foods before and after a fasting period, such as tomato soup and bread, etc. If you have any underlying health issues, are pregnant, or are taking prescribed medication from your doctor, you may wish to consult your doctor before entering a time of prayer and fasting.

1. Decide How You Wish to Fast

- a) Full Fast - Abstain from all solid food.
- b) Partial Fast - Abstain from one or two meals a day, or from a certain type of food or drink.

Additionally, you may also wish to abstain from other activities (e.g. entertainment, hobbies, social media) to focus on God.

2. Set Some Goals

Write down what you are believing God for over the next seven days. Begin with the goal of knowing God more intimately and hearing His voice more clearly. If there are areas in your life where you need a breakthrough, commit them to God and believe that He can work in your life as you fast and pray. Most importantly, remain open to whatever God wants to say and do as you seek Him.

As we embark on the next seven days as a church, we are doing this together! You may find it helpful to find someone —your spouse or a close friend —and go through the devotional together. If so, commit to sharing with each other what you sense God is speaking to you and doing in your life over this week.

DAY 1

KEY VERSE

*"Jesus said, 'Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.'
And they divided up his clothes by casting lots."
Luke 23:34 (NIV)*

SAYING 1

*"Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."
Luke 23:34 (NIV)*

One of the most striking features of Jesus' crucifixion is that both His first and last words from the cross were addressed to the Father.

His first response is to offer forgiveness. This speaks not only of His divine Sonship, but of the intimate relationship He shared with God the Father, even in His darkest hour.

What is truly astonishing is that Jesus begins His ordeal not with a cry for help or a plea for relief, but with a prayer, one that is selfless and deeply compassionate. He prays not for Himself, but for those who have wounded Him the most: those who abandoned, rejected, and unjustly condemned Him.

Consider the weight of His suffering. Jesus' closest friends had deserted Him. The crowds, once perhaps curious or even supportive, had turned on Him, shouting for His execution. The deeply religious leaders, who were meant to guide the people, had manipulated events to see Him crucified.

All this came after many hours of relentless cruelty: beatings, mockery, scourging, humiliation, and physical pain. Even as He hung on the cross, stripped of dignity and mocked:

*"...save yourself! Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God!"
Matthew 27:40 (NIV)*

His heart remained full of love for those around Him, and for us. We thank God that He did not come down from the cross and, in doing so, opened the wells of salvation for us all.

Forgiveness at the Centre

At the heart of Christianity is forgiveness. We need it because our failings are many and our sins are grave. It was not merely the actions of others, but our own brokenness, that kept Jesus on the cross until every debt was paid.

He bore our griefs and carried our burdens, making room for complete forgiveness, freely available to all who will honestly turn to God in repentance and humility.

RESPONSE

We should also be "first responders", offering forgiveness first

I grew up in Belfast, Northern Ireland, during decades of civil unrest, troubles, and violence. Amidst all of this, there was deep pain and much unforgiveness. I am glad to say that today I see more forgiveness than unforgiveness there. Thank you, God!

"With God all things are possible"
Matthew 19:26 (NIV).

As we contemplate this, let us strive to embody a heart of genuine forgiveness in our daily interactions. If you have never personally received this free gift of God's forgiveness, why not turn to God right now, on day one of this short journey together?

It is as simple as this. Pray this prayer with me from your heart:

Dear Lord and heavenly Father, I have sinned against You. Today, I ask You to forgive me for my sin. Empower me through Your Holy Spirit to walk with You in this life. I put all my trust in You and submit my life into Your hands from this moment forward.

In Jesus' name,

Amen

If you prayed that prayer and want to follow Jesus, contact us at info@destinychurch.de

NOTES

DAY 2

KEY VERSE

"When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold your son!" Then He said to the disciple, "Behold your mother!" And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home."

John 19:26-27 (NKJV)

SAYING 2

"Behold Your Son, Behold Your Mother"

As Jesus hung up on the cross, His body wracked with pain, His heart remained attentive to the needs of those He loved. In the midst of unimaginable suffering, He saw Mary, His mother, and John, the disciple whom He loved, standing close by.

With words both tender and profound, He said, "Woman, behold your son" (John 19:26, NKJV), and to John, "Behold your mother" (John 19:27, NKJV).

In this deeply intimate moment, Jesus was not only providing for His mother's earthly welfare, but also redefining the nature of spiritual family for all who would follow Him.

The cross is not just the place where Jesus paid for our salvation, but also where He modelled selfless love in its most practical form. To "behold" is more than simply to look; it is an invitation to embrace, to assume responsibility, and to form a new bond.

Jesus challenges us to see beyond blood ties and to embrace the spiritual family God places around us.

RESPONSE

Look Again at Those Around You

Today, let us pause and genuinely reflect: Who might God be inviting us to "behold" with new eyes and renewed compassion?

Is there someone in our lives, perhaps a neighbour, a colleague, a relative, or even a stranger, whose burdens we are being called to help carry? Are we attentive to the needs of those God has entrusted to us, even when doing so interrupts our plans, costs us comfort, or comes at great personal expense?

The cross beckons us to a love that is costly and real. We are called to be mothers, fathers, sons, and daughters to those who stand at the foot of our own crosses, those in pain, those in need, and those who are often overlooked.

In a world that prizes independence, Jesus' words draw us into the radical interdependence of the Christian community. His words from the cross urge us to look beyond ourselves, to notice those whom God has placed in our midst, and to care for them with compassion and grace.

DAY 3

KEY VERSE

"And He said to him, 'Truly I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.'"

Luke 23:43 (NASB)

SAYING 3

"Today You Will Be with Me in Paradise"

When Jesus uttered the words, "Today you will be with Me in Paradise" (Luke 23:43), to the repentant thief beside Him, He revealed an astonishing reality: God's mercy breaks through all barriers, reaching even the most unlikely, the most broken, and the most desperate.

These words, spoken amid unspeakable suffering, echo with hope for every heart weighed down by guilt, regret, or fear of rejection. The thief had nothing to offer Jesus except his confession, his faith, and his plea: "Remember me."

In response, Jesus promised him immediate acceptance, forgiveness, and the assurance of eternal fellowship. This profound interaction highlights the unconditional nature of God's love, showing that it is not contingent upon one's past deeds or worthiness, but entirely upon grace.

RESPONSE

Embracing the Marginalised

Let us be challenged today, not merely to admire Christ's mercy, but to receive it and extend it.

Who in your life stands on the margins, longing for hope? Will you, like Jesus, speak words of acceptance and grace?

NOTES

DAY 4

KEY VERSE

"And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'Eli, Eli, lema sabaktanei?' that is, 'My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?'"

Matthew 27:46 (NASB)

SAYING 4

"My God, My God, Why Have You Forsaken Me?"

Not only does Jesus understand grief and sorrow in a general sense, but He has plumbed the depths of human anguish. He knows what it is to feel completely rejected and abandoned, not just by friends or family, but by all.

Matthew's account tells us that EVERYONE deserted Him and fled. He was left utterly alone, betrayed and isolated at His darkest hour. The Father, in pouring out the wrath that our transgressions deserved, allowed His own Son to experience the greatest abandonment.

Jesus was forsaken so that we can be connected.

RESPONSE

"Get real"

Be open and honest before God about any confusion or hurt.

If Jesus voiced His anguish to God, we should also bring our pain and questions to Him in prayer. Confusion and sorrow can invite us closer to God. Prayer is about trusting that God listens and cares, even in silence.

Pray boldly and often, knowing that you are never alone. When we bring our grief, questions, and pain to Him, we do so knowing that He truly understands and that He has already borne the weight of our sorrows out of His boundless love for us.

Through prayer, we meet God who understands and transforms us. Will you choose to draw closer to Him today, even with the things that may currently confuse you?

NOTES

DAY 5

KEY VERSE

"After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), 'I thirst.'"

John 19:28 (ESV)

SAYING 5

"I thirst!" John 19:28 (ESV)

At first glance, "I thirst!" might seem merely a cry from a dying man. Yet in this brief utterance, Jesus reveals both His true humanity and His profound spiritual purpose.

He who turned water into wine, and offered living water to the Samaritan woman, now confesses His own thirst.

He who promised, "whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst" John 4:14 (NKJV), submits Himself fully to the limitations and suffering of human frailty.

The vulnerability Jesus displays here is striking. He, the Creator, experiences the depth of physical agony, showing us that God is not distant from our pain but enters into it willingly.

This utterance is not only a testament to His suffering but also an invitation for us to recognise the reality of our own needs, both physical and spiritual. In His thirst, Jesus demonstrates the full extent of His willingness to identify with humanity, bridging the gap between divinity and mortal experience so that all people might find hope in Him.

There is a pastoral invitation here. Jesus understands our thirst, whether it is for comfort, answers, or hope. He entered our suffering, so when we pray, when we voice our longings and pain, we meet a Saviour who cares, listens, and transforms. Our prayers, even when dry or desperate, are not wasted. Like Jesus, we can trust God's presence in silence and trial.

RESPONSE

Sometimes Helpers Need a Little Help

Are you willing to acknowledge your thirst, to bring your deepest needs before God in prayer? Will you allow your spiritual dryness to draw you closer, not further away?

Jesus' "I thirst!" is both a comfort and a call: to come to Him, to trust, to pray boldly and often, and to find in Him the living water that truly satisfies.

Today, will you choose to draw closer and find refreshment in Christ?

NOTES

DAY 6

KEY VERSE

"When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, 'It is finished,' and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit."

John 19:30 (ESV)

SAYING 6

"It is Finished"

In the Gospel of John, chapter 19, verse 30, Jesus utters the triumphant cry, "It is finished."

These words, spoken as He hung upon the cross, are far more than a declaration that His suffering is over. In combination with the resurrection, they echo through history as the fulfilment of God's redemptive plan.

"It is finished" ("teleo" in Greek) signifies completion, accomplishment, and fulfilment. It can mean the debt is discharged, or that everything necessary has been fully completed. The task entrusted to Jesus by the Father, the fulfillment of all the Law required, the bearing of sin, the defeat of evil, and the opening of the way to God, is now fully accomplished.

Jesus had fulfilled every prophecy and every requirement of the Law. The debt of sin, which separated humanity from God, was paid in full. Jesus did not say, "I am finished," but "It is finished." The cross and resurrection together proclaim that the work of redemption has been fully accomplished, once for all, never to be repeated.

In a pastoral sense, "It is finished" means that our failures and shortcomings need not separate us from God. When you feel weighed down by guilt or spiritual dryness, remember that Christ's cross is a place where pain and promise meet. His words assure us that nothing remains to be done for our acceptance before God.

Will you allow this finished work to draw you closer in prayer, to seek the living water He freely offers? Today, let "It is finished" inspire you to pray with confidence, to live with hope, and to pursue a life shaped by grace.

The cross is not only the end of Jesus' suffering. It is the beginning of our freedom and new life.

RESPONSE

We Can Also Say: "It Is Finished."

Many will read these words and think, "That was possible for Jesus, but not for me. After all, I am only human." Not so. If you are born again, you have the divine life of God in you. He who began a good work in you will complete it.

Paul was able to say:

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith;"

2 Timothy 4:7 (NASB)

So can we. Let us reach for that finish line. Pray for God's strength and strategy so that you too may finish your race.

DAY 7

KEY VERSE

"Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, 'Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!' And having said this he breathed his last."

Luke 23:46 (ESV)

SAYING 7

"Father, Into Your Hands I Commit My Spirit"

In the closing moments of His life, Jesus uttered the tender and profound words, "Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit" (Luke 23:46 ESV).

These words are not only a declaration of trust but also an invitation for us to embrace a deeper reliance on God. Jesus' statement was not uttered in comfort or ease, but amidst agony and isolation. Yet His voice was filled with confidence in the loving care of His Father, even as He surrendered Himself fully, trusting the outcome beyond the grave. In times of hardship, these words remind us that true faith emerges during adversity, leading us to place our lives securely in God's hands.

Throughout Scripture, we see that surrender is not a weakness but the gateway to true strength. David also prayed, *"Into your hand I commit my spirit; you have redeemed me, O Lord, faithful God."* Psalm 31:5 (ESV). Jesus embodies this psalm, fulfilling it perfectly in the face of suffering.

Surrendering our spirit into God's hands means releasing anxiety, control, and the burden of outcomes. When Jesus prayed these words, He demonstrated not helplessness but holy confidence.

RESPONSE

All to Jesus I Surrender, All to Him I Freely Give

Friends, do we merely admire Jesus' trust, or will we follow Him into deeper surrender? His invitation is not just for our final breath, but for each day.

Will you commit your concerns, dreams, and relationships into the Father's hands? Let Christ's example challenge us to pray more courageously, not holding back but coming boldly before God, trusting that He hears and cares.

If Jesus could entrust His spirit in the darkest hour, surely, we can in our daily struggles. Today, let us respond by spending intentional time in prayer, releasing our lives into the hands of the Father, where true peace and transformation begin.



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